

OSHC WORKING ALONE POLICY

It is the responsibility of the approved provider to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of all children in their care, and the employees of the Service. This policy has been created to ensure that the appropriate arrangements are in place in situations where educators are working alone in an Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) Service.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
2.2.2	Incident and emergency management	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practiced and implemented.
2.2.3	Child Protection	Management, educators and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to identify and respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect.
QUALITY AREA 7: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP		
7.1.2	Management Systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service
7.1.3	Roles and Responsibilities	Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and understood and support effective decision making and operation of the service

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW AND NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
S.161	Offence to operate education and care service without nominated supervisor
97	Emergency and evacuation procedures
98	Telephone or other communication equipment
99	Children leaving the education and care service premises
103	Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair
102D	Authorisation for service to transport children
117B	Minimum requirements for a person in day-to-day charge
146	Nominated Supervisor

RELATED POLICIES

Administration of First Aid Policy	Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
Child Safe Environment Policy	Interactions with Children, Family and Staff Policy
Child Protection Policy	Responsible Person Policy
Code of Conduct Policy	Safe Transportation Policy
Delivery of Children to, and Collection from EEC	Student and Volunteer Workers Policy
Service Premises Policy	Supervision Policy
Family Communication Policy	Work Health and Safety Policy
Health and Safety Policy	

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to identify, assess, manage and minimise the risks associated with working alone in the Before and After School Care and Vacation Care setting. The safety of our educators and children is paramount. This policy will provide a guide for educators in managing the potential risks, ensuring they are offered the support and the resources required to continue to provide high quality care for children.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, educators, management, approved provider, nominated supervisor, and visitors of the OSHC Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Our OSHC Service adheres to the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and have adopted the Child Safe Standards necessary to protect children from harm. Our staff implement child safe practices and provide adequate supervision at all times.

'Working alone' refers to one educator working either on their own (without children present) or caring for up to 15 children as per the National Regulations for Out of School Hours Services. Where possible, our OSHC Service will employ at least two staff members.

Situations may arise however, where normal enrolment at our OSHC Service decreases due to an infectious disease, natural disaster or other reason, and two staff members is either not practical, or financially viable. In this situation, we may need to amend our rosters resulting in only one educator/staff member in attendance.

The viability of the working alone arrangement is largely dependent on maintaining strong and consistent communication between the Service management and school executives or venue management team.

RECRUITMENT AND STAFFING

Our OSHC Service ensures that all staff employed have been recruited from a robust screening and employment process. Only the most suitable and qualified applicants are employed with our OSHC Service, and we have ensured all staff have valid Working with Children Checks/clearance and where required, have had police checks, be up to date with Child Protection training and hold current First Aid (including CPR), Emergency Asthma and Anaphylaxis training.

Staff who may be required to work on their own, will take on the role of responsible person during this time. Only staff who are appointed as a responsible person may work on their own. A responsible person must have an adequate knowledge and understanding of the provision of education and care to children, the Education and Care National Law and Regulations and National Quality Standard, the approved learning framework (EYLF), Family Assistance Law and administration of CCS. They have the ability to effectively supervise and manage an education and care service.

Our OSHC Service ensures that a support staff member is available by telephone at all times the OSHC Service is open and providing education and care to children.

STAFFING

- A list of support/emergency staff who can be called upon must be clearly displayed next to the Service phone. The staff will need to reside locally and hold qualifications for approved First Aid, Asthma, Anaphylaxis training and be up to date with Child Protection training. The phone numbers will also be programmed into the Service phone on speed dial.
- The contact details for the Approved provider will also be displayed.
- The educator on duty may also call upon one of the School staff for assistance if required.
- The educator on duty will check in at the school office prior to the start of each session.

PHYSICAL PREMISES

- Our OSHC Service will ensure that the physical environment is safe and free from hazards including the outdoor environment
- Daily checklists will be completed to inspect the indoor and outdoor areas. These will be completed prior to the children's arrival

- Adequate lighting will be installed around the OSHC Service, walkways, carparks and bathrooms
- A working alone risk assessment will be completed on a regular basis to identify any hazards or potential hazards including slips/trips/falls
- The educational program is also subject to risk assessment each week to ensure the viability and safety of particular activities where supervision may be limited due number of staff available at the service
- Bathrooms and tiled surfaces will be checked regularly to ensure they are dry and not a slip risk to children

SAFETY

- Attendance records will be maintained and checked at all times
- The educator will conduct random 'head counts' during each care session
- Emergency evacuation procedures (including lockdown and bushfire emergency procedures) will be clearly displayed at the entry/exit point of the Service's indoor and outdoor areas. The evacuation procedures must include a floor plan which clearly identifies the exit route and assembly area.
- Emergency evacuation drills must be rehearsed at least every three months. They will run for a 5-day period (Monday-Friday) to ensure all children are included. Each practice must be documented and evaluated.
- Emergency phone numbers will be clearly displayed near the service's phone and entered into the work mobile phone for the educator to access at all times
- The educator working alone must observe Work Health and Safety practices at all times as outlined in the Service's *Workplace Health and Safety Policy*
- The educator must follow safe lifting procedures and must not lift anything that is a recommended two-person lift.
- Our Service fosters a close working relationship with the School staff. Each day the School Principal/Deputy Principal will check in at the Service before leaving for the day. [May be applicable to OSHC Services located on school grounds]
- The educator on duty will leave the OSHC Service with the last authorised adult signing out the last child in care. This is to ensure that the educator isn't leaving the premises on their own. In the instance that the last child is collected before 6:00pm the educator can make up the time in accordance with clause 21.8 of the Children's Services Award 2010. The make-up time must be worked during ordinary hours of operation at the ordinary rate of pay.
- The educator on duty will park their car at the closest point to the Service entry/exit

- When the OSHC Service is located on school grounds, the educator will also have access to the school staff car park and have master keys to lock the gates
- The educator on duty must carry the service phone and two-way radio (walkie talkie) at all times. [Relevant if the OSHC Service is located on school grounds and have made arrangements with school staff to assist in case of emergency].
- The responsible person will nominate a group of Senior Representatives who may be responsible to alert an alternate contact in the case of an emergency (when the educator on duty is unable to do so). The Senior Representatives will be trained on how to use the phone and Walkie Talkie in case of an emergency situation.
- Ideally, the Senior Representatives will be in years 5 and 6. If there are no children enrolled from either year group the responsible person will nominate the most suitable children based on their age and maturity.

ARRIVAL AND COLLECTION OF CHILDREN (OSHC Service located on school site)

- Parents/guardians will sign their child/ren into the OSHC Service at the beginning of the session of care and when collecting their child/ren at the end of a session of care, noting their name, time and date of care on the attendance record.
- At the conclusion of a Before School Care session, the educator on duty will sign out all children. Children from year 1 to year 6 will walk to their classrooms/assembly area. Kindergarten children will be escorted by the educator on duty.
- The educator on duty will sign in the children upon their arrival to the Service for an After-School Care session. Children from year 1 to year 6 will walk directly to the Service at the conclusion of the school day.
- Kindergarten children will be escorted to the service by their classroom teacher.
- In the event that a child is scheduled to attend the service and has not arrived, the educator will notify the school office and the office staff will follow up on the child's whereabouts.
- All children will be signed out (from an After-School Care or Vacation Care session) by their parent/guardian, or authorised person as indicated on their enrolment form.
- In the event where a child cannot be collected by their parent/guardian or an authorised person the parent/guardian will notify the Service in writing. The educator on duty will need to sight photo identification before releasing the child.

ARRIVAL AND COLLECTION OF CHILDREN

- Parents/guardians will sign their child/ren into the OSHC Service at the beginning of the session of care and when collecting their child/ren at the end of a session of care, noting their name, time and date of care on the attendance record.
- Authorisations for regular transportation of children will be checked and verified by the educator. (this includes walking children to school). (see *Safe Transportation Policy*)
- At the end of Before School care session, the educator will walk/drive the children to their school
- Adequate and active supervision must be provided at all times
- Head counts and checks against the attendance register will be made when children depart the OSHC Service and upon arrival at the school. Verification of actual attendance at school/s will be made by another authorised person.
- For After School Care session, the educator will meet the children at a designated location at the school and check their attendance record.
- If a child has not arrived, they will check with school staff to ensure the child hasn't gone home sick during the day. Parents/guardians may need to be contacted to verify the child's location.
- The educator will transport the child/ren to the OSHC Service.
- Upon arrival to the Service, a head count will be conducted against the attendance record.
- Children will be signed into the OSHC Service by the educator.
- All children will be signed out (from an After-School Care or Vacation Care session) by their parent/guardian, or authorised person as indicated on their enrolment form.
- In the event where a child cannot be collected by their parent/guardian or an authorised person the parent/guardian will notify the Service in writing. The educator on duty will need to sight photo identification before releasing the child.

ILLNESS AND INJURIES

- The educator on duty may, on occasion be required to care for a sick or injured child. It is important that the child receives suitable care and/or first aid.
- It is also important for the educator to ensure that appropriate supervision is maintained for the other children in care. Depending on the individual circumstances and the severity of the incident, the educator may need to call upon the assistance of one of the school teachers or support staff or contact the Approved Provider and/or parent/guardians.
- When caring for a sick/injured child the educator may need to alter the program of activities to ensure children's safety is maintained and supervision is provided for other children. For example, a physically active play experience may need to be paused while the educator is administering First Aid

and the children may be directed to have quiet/reading time or the educator may instruct one of the Senior Representatives or older children to initiate a group game.

- If the educator on duty falls ill or is injured and is unable to call for help the nominated Senior Representative will alert school staff via the walkie talkie or contact emergency services using the service telephone.
- In the event of any incident, injury, trauma or illness, the educator will adhere to our policies and procedures.
- An *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness* record must be completed accurately by the educator and acknowledged/signed by the parent/caregiver upon collection of their child.
- The Approved Provider will ensure that notification is made to the regulatory authority in the event of any serious incident/injury or in the event of a notifiable illness/disease.

TOILETING

- The educator on duty will run a “Toilet call” every hour. In the event that a child needs to use the toilet in-between toilet calls they will be required to take another child with them. The child should be of the same gender and of similar age.
- In the event that the children take an unreasonable amount of time, the educator on duty may send a Senior Representative to follow up on the children’s whereabouts.
- Where possible, the educator will use the bathroom outside of face to face hours. If the educator is required to use the bathroom while children are in care the educator may call upon one of the school staff (if applicable).

CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

Our OSHC Service will continue to evaluate and assess our working alone practices through critical reflections, checklists, professional learning and discussions with families and staff.

The viability of the Service to operate with only one educator must be carefully considered to ensure adequate supervision is provided at all times.

SOURCES

Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2024). [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#).

Children’s Services Award 2010.

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2023).

[Education and Care Services National Regulations](#). (Amended 2023).

Government of South Australia. Department for Education and Child Development- *Guidelines for Educators working alone in OSHC Services operating on Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) sites*.

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Libby Haines	Director	October 2024
POLICY CREATED	OCTOBER 2024	NEXT REVIEW DATE	OCTOBER 2025
VERSION NUMBER	V5.10.24		
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • annual policy maintenance- no major changes • sources checked for currency and updated as required 		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS	NEXT REVIEW DATE	
OCTOBER 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • annual policy review- no major changes • sources checked for currency and updated as required • safe transport of children section deleted 	OCTOBER 2024	